

REMARKS

In reviewing the file of the present application, applicants found that at least one previous paper submitted by the applicants to the U.S. Patent Office erroneously stated the title of the present application as "CHAIN-BELT FOR CONTINUOUSLY VARIABLY TRANSMISSION". To avoid any ambiguity, applicants hereby confirm that the correct title of the present application is "LINK CHAIN AND METHOD OF MAKING, ASSEMBLING AND UTILIZING THE SAME" as stated on page 1 of the specification and set forth in the official filing receipt.

The disclosure stands objected to because of informalities on pages 34 and 39 and because the paragraph following the subtitle "CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED CASES" was not up-to-date. These deficiencies have been corrected by the present amendment.

Claims 2-4 and 9 are pending in the application, as claims 1, 5-8 and 10-13 have been cancelled without prejudice by the present amendment since at least some of these claims are directed to non-elected subject matter.

The currently pending claims 2 to 4 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolf (U.S. Patent 5,427,583).

The rejection of claim 2 is based on the Examiner's finding that "It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the ratio of the rounded surfaces of the Wolf device less than ten, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art." Applicants respectfully note that the Wolf reference does not discuss a rolling interaction between the coupling units and the links at all. The only reference to a rolling motion is found in column 3, lines 66 to 68, as follows:

“The link elements 3 have convex rocker surfaces 6 which can roll off against each other to provide for the articulated connection of adjacent links 1.”

What Wolf describes here refers only to the rolling of the link elements 3 on each other, and nothing is said about the interaction between the link element (“coupling element” in the present application) and the link. Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner’s stated grounds for rejection, namely that the general conditions of the claim are disclosed in the prior art and that it would therefore require only routine skill to discover the optimum or workable ranges, are not applicable to the Wolf reference, because it does not disclose anything related to the interaction between the coupling element and the link. From Wolf’s Figure 1, it actually appears that the external surface of the coupling element and the internal surface of the link 1 have the same radius in the area where they are in contact with each other, so that the possibility of varying the radii relative to each other does not suggest itself to a person of ordinary skill in the art. Consequently, claim 2 of the present application cannot be said to be obvious in the sense of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in light of the Wolf ‘583 reference. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 2 be withdrawn and that claim 2, as well as its dependent claims 3 and 4, be allowed.

The rejection of claim 9 is based on the Examiner's finding that "It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the chain of Wolf so the pivoting angles are different so as to satisfy the ranges of the inequality of the claimed invention to obtain a range, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art." Applicants respectfully note that the Wolf reference shows the link chain only in a straight line. The general concept of a pivoting range does not suggest itself from the figures nor from the description in the Wolf reference, so a person skilled in the art would find no motivation from the Wolf reference to experiment with varying angles between the links in order to find an optimum range. Consequently, claim 9 of the present application cannot be said to be obvious in the

